



Meraki Health Centre

Trans Youth CAN! Community Event on Parental Support

October 16, 2020



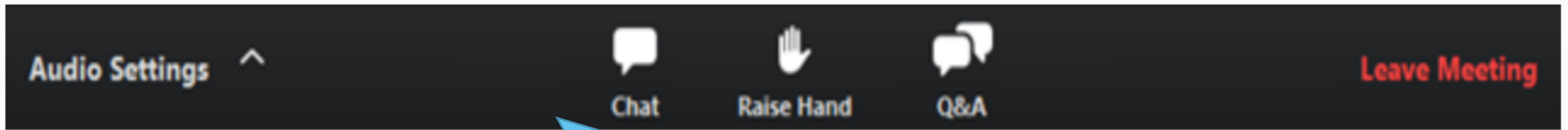
Centre de santé
MERAKI
Health Centre

With our hands,
hearts, and
minds open



Some Zoom tips

- Your audio and video is turned off in a webinar format
- Want to interact with us? Use your zoom menu

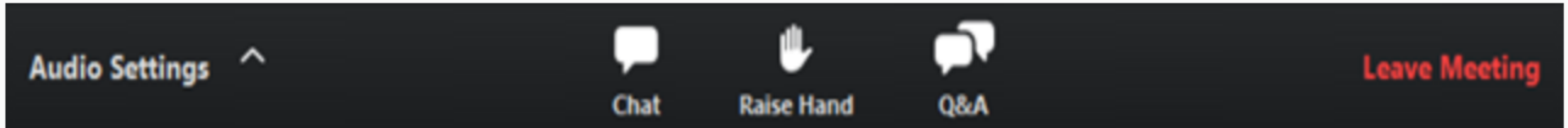


Send messages to the hosts. Hosts may also post links to resources and info in the chat window.

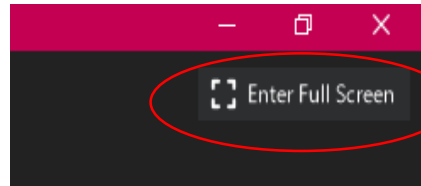
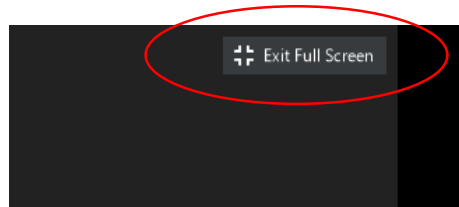
Submit **any and all questions** you have through the Q&A window. We will be answering submitted questions throughout the webinar.
Questions can be submitted anonymously



Some Zoom tips



Click the ^ arrow to change your speaker or audio output (e.g., speakers to headphones)



Or click minimize to make a small floating window you can drag around your screen.
**desktop only*

Go back and forth between full screen by clicking on the TOP RIGHT of your zoom window. Or press 'Esc' to exit full screen.



Click here to go back to your full zoom window.



Thanks for attending this event!

We're excited to have you!

- With this event we want to:
 - Share information about our project
 - Introduce our *SECOND INFOGRAPHIC*
 - Answer questions anyone has about our infographic and this project
- Our event facilitators today are:
 - **Shuvo Ghosh**: Co-Director Meraki Health Centre
 - **Gabriela Kassel Gomez**: Research Coordinator for Meraki Health Centre
 - **Maria Scolack**: Clinical Coordinator at Meraki Health Centre
 - **Annie Pullen Sansfaçon**: Co-investigator for Trans Youth CAN!, Principal Investigator for 'Stories of Care'
 - **Françoise Susset**: Clinical psychologist at Meraki Health Centre
 - **Sandra Gotovac**: Project Coordinator for Trans Youth CAN!



Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that, in spite of the virtual nature of this presentation, we are gathered here on land (known as Tiohatiá:ke/Montréal) that is traditional unceded territory belonging to the Kanien'keha:ká First Nation, and it is historically known as a site for many First Nations gatherings.



What is the Trans Youth CAN! study?

- Looking at medical, social, and family outcomes of trans and non-binary youth referred for puberty blockers or hormones
- 10 medical clinics that provide gender-affirming medical care for youth across Canada



What is the Trans Youth CAN! study?

- Youth from puberty to age 15 were recruited at their 1st medical appointment for blockers or hormones
- They are followed **for 2 years** through their journey of gender-affirming medical care
- Participants complete surveys and give permission to get information on their health and clinical care from clinic medical records
- Youth could invite one parent or caregiver to participate in the study
- Participant recruitment and baseline data were from Sept 2017 to June 2019



Learn all about our study at

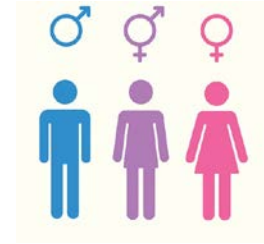
www.transyouthcan.ca



Who are the participants?

● 174 youth

- **Age:** Average 13.8 years; ranged from 10 to 15 years old
- **Gender:** 76% trans male; 16% trans female; 8% non-binary
- **Background:** 19% Indigenous; 6.5% visible minority; 74.5% white
24% from immigrant families

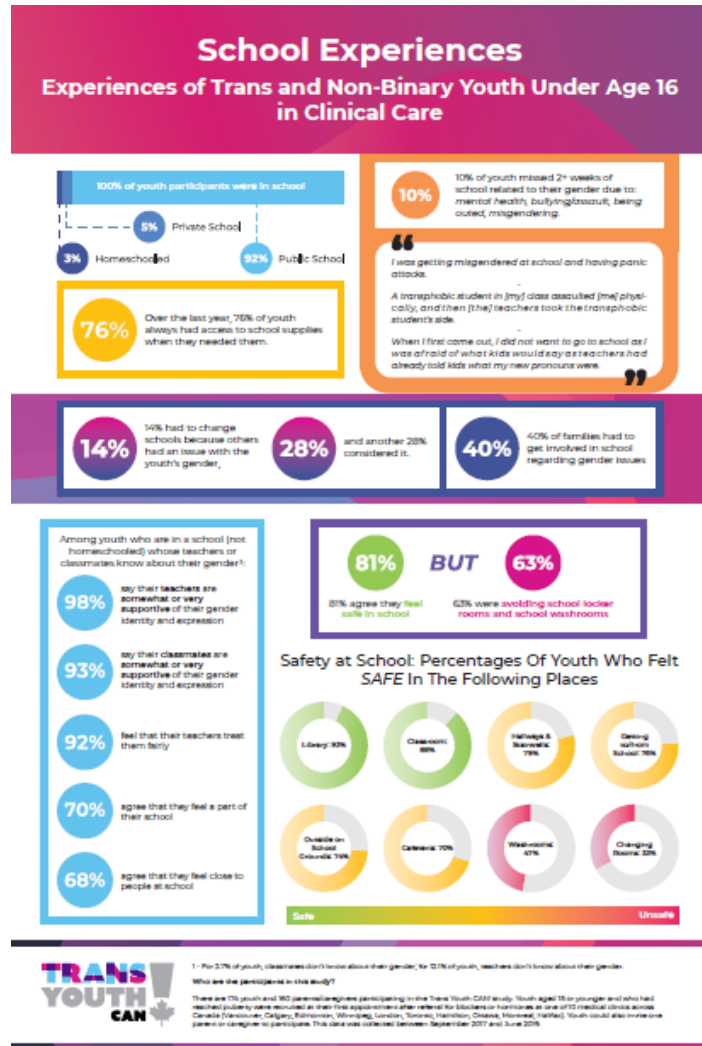


● 160 parents/caregivers

- Age: 31 to 63 years old
- Majority were moms: 76% birth moms, 8% adoptive moms
 - 11% birth dads; 1% non-binary birth parents
 - Remaining 4% of parents: adoptive/foster/step dads; step moms, grandparents
- 16.2% sexual or gender minority



Our first infographic!



Get the full downloadable PDF on our website:



<https://www.transyouthcan.ca/results/school-experiences-infographic/>



Our NEW infographic!



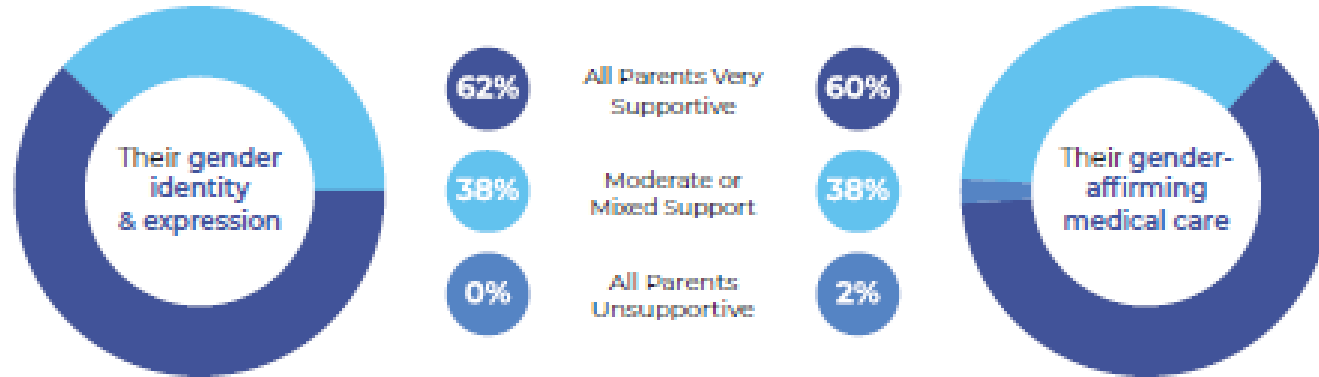
Get the full downloadable PDF on our website:



<https://www.transyouthcan.ca/results/parental-support-infographic/>

Parental support for youth's gender

What youth say about their parents' support for:



Youth whose parents were all very supportive had LESS gender distress¹ than youth who have moderate/mixed support from parents.

15%

About 15% of youth rate their parents' support **more positively** than parents rate their own support.

20%

About 20% of youth rate their parents' support **more negatively** than parents rate their own support.

The Family

56%

56% of youth feel their family understand them.

82%

82% of youth feel their family cares about their feelings.

Less Than
10%

Less than 10% of youth and parents say addressing their youth's gender had a negative impact on the family. About **half of youth** and parents said say addressing their youth's gender has a **positive impact** on their family.

What youth say they need from their parents



Stories of Gender Affirming Care

- Companion study to Trans Youth CAN! Project
- What is the Story of Gender Affirming Care project?
 - Looked at the experiences of trans children and youth and their families accessing gender-affirming (GA) care during the prepubertal, pubertal and post-pubertal stages of development, to better understand
 - Motivations and pathways
 - Strategies to express and/or address dysphoria and navigate social and family situations
 - What contributes to their psychosocial well-being and quality of life
 - Their experiences with GA medical care



Stories of Gender Affirming Care-Participants

- Recruitment in 3 medical clinics that provide gender-affirming medical care for youth across Canada: CHEO (Ottawa), Meraki Health Center (Montreal), Health Sciences Centre (Winnipeg)
- We conducted 72 interviews : 36 with young people, 36 with their parents / caregivers
- Among the youth:
 - Average age 14.5 years
 - 5 age 9 to 12 years (14%), 14 were 13 to 15 years (39%) and 17 were 16 to 17 years (47%)
 - 21 trans male, 15 trans female, 3 non-binary
- We have collected, among other dimensions, very rich information on parental support, both from the youth and the parents' perspectives.

**as of October 2020 this data is unpublished and currently under review*



Parent and child: different realities when the child begins questioning their gender

- Parents often interpreted gender non-conformity as a **sexual divergence**
- Parents tell us they saw **no obvious signs**
- Some children **didn't show signs** because were questioning
- Some children hid their identity and/or delayed their coming-out to **protect their parents or because they were worried about reaction**

*Yeah, around 9 year-old, it's when everything started... [...] I didn't really realize I was trans yet. That came after. And I didn't really realized, I really thought I was all alone in that so I did everything to hide it. That's why if you find photos of me before my coming-out [...] I will often wear much more feminine clothes, and long hair too. **

(Jeff, 15-year-old, transmasculine)

*Yeah, I didn't see it coming. I didn't see it coming. You know, [deadname] always dressed as a little girl, always had long hair until recently. **

(Jackie, Jeff's parent)

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Gender exploration: when parents didn't see anything

- Youth can experience a **high level of anxiety** before coming-out
- Coming-out then appears as a **relief** for youth, especially when parents' reaction is better than expected
- Regardless of the reaction, lots of parents start to feel **stress, worries** and even feeling of **grief** because they have to accept and handle a situation they often know nothing about.

[Telling her] felt good for me, 'cause like I didn't really want to make her like worry, but I still made her worried a bit. But, it just felt good to like tell something that I wanted to say.

Claire, 17yo, transfeminine

*I am not yet convinced, maybe I don't want either because I find that he already has, he is ADHD, with Inouk then the society is really racist so I'm already afraid for him and then, on top of that, he has to be transgender and lesbian, [...] It's like too hard. [...] I'm just thinking, maybe he's going to change his mind, maybe it's just a pass, or I think he's going to dress as a woman but he's not a woman, do you understand the difference?**

Barbara, Claire's Parent

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Transition process: blossoming child, mourning parent

- After coming-out, youths describe **beginning to enjoy life** (and in some case, stop self-destructive behavior) while parents start a journey of adaptation and sometimes **grieving**.
- Transition process is often exciting for youth who want to **go faster** but is a choc for parents who are worried and often want to **slow things down**.
- However, some families want to see quicker changes. Sometimes because they think their **kid would be happier** sometimes because they want “**the worst to be behind**” or because they struggle with an ambiguous identity.

[...] I guess when I first told um, I don't totally remember, I was just relieved to have told them and it's like, I need medical intervention as soon as possible [laughs].

Steve, 17yo, transmasculine

Hum, there's definitely a grieving. Because it isn't what you expected. Hum. I liked the type of girl I thought he was, which was this strong independent [pause] leader. So, you know, that, as a feminist, I thought that was kind of sad.

Sylvie, Steve's Parent

*[It feels good] to be named as my girl name, to forget my boy name.**

Debbie, 9yo, transfeminine

I named her [deadname]. And it absolutely broke my heart when she chose her own name [cries]

Maria, Debbie's parent

*as of October 2020 this data is unpublished and currently under review

Joining in thoughts and action

- Despite their fears and questionings, **many parents quickly took action** whether by informing themselves or accompanying their child in a transition process. This seemed to help parents to go through the acceptance journey.
- Most youth felt supported.
- Several youths reported that **their suicidal thoughts or self-harming stopped thanks to the support** they had in the transition process.
- Noting benefits on their child reassures parents.
- By supporting the child in the transition process, parents and child appear to become closer and to **strengthen their relationship**.
- Parent's perspective shifted : a learning process.

*So now I have my blockers and she's happy, my mom sees the change from before I came out to a little later and until today, I'm much happier. I make a lot more friends I go out more often and I am more like happy to get up in the morning to go to school and I sleep better and actually my mom is just happy to see that.**

Jim, 14yo, transmasculine

*The child wouldn't come to me anymore. It was "good night" and it was it. We didn't have interactions anymore, then, since we come here, that there is a tighter supervision, there, it is easy. There, I have hugs, I have ... we are listening to TV [...] It just got easier. The smile came back too.**

Lydia, Jim's parent

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Building the narrative together

- Most of youth and their parents' **narratives were coherent**, even when parents had no clue about their child's gender identity before they came out. They seem to have **built a common understanding of the story**.
- Some youth recalled memories their parents told them.
- Having heard the story of their child, many parents are able to **see and understand the signs retrospectively**.
- Parent's perspective shifts during the transition process, and most of them are able to see that their child's identity was the same all along. They are able to see the **continuity**.

Well, at first I think I started to want to be like a male at the age of 3 and then my parents were like dressing me neutral, like just t-shirts and shorts, you know? No pink, purple, blue, or something.

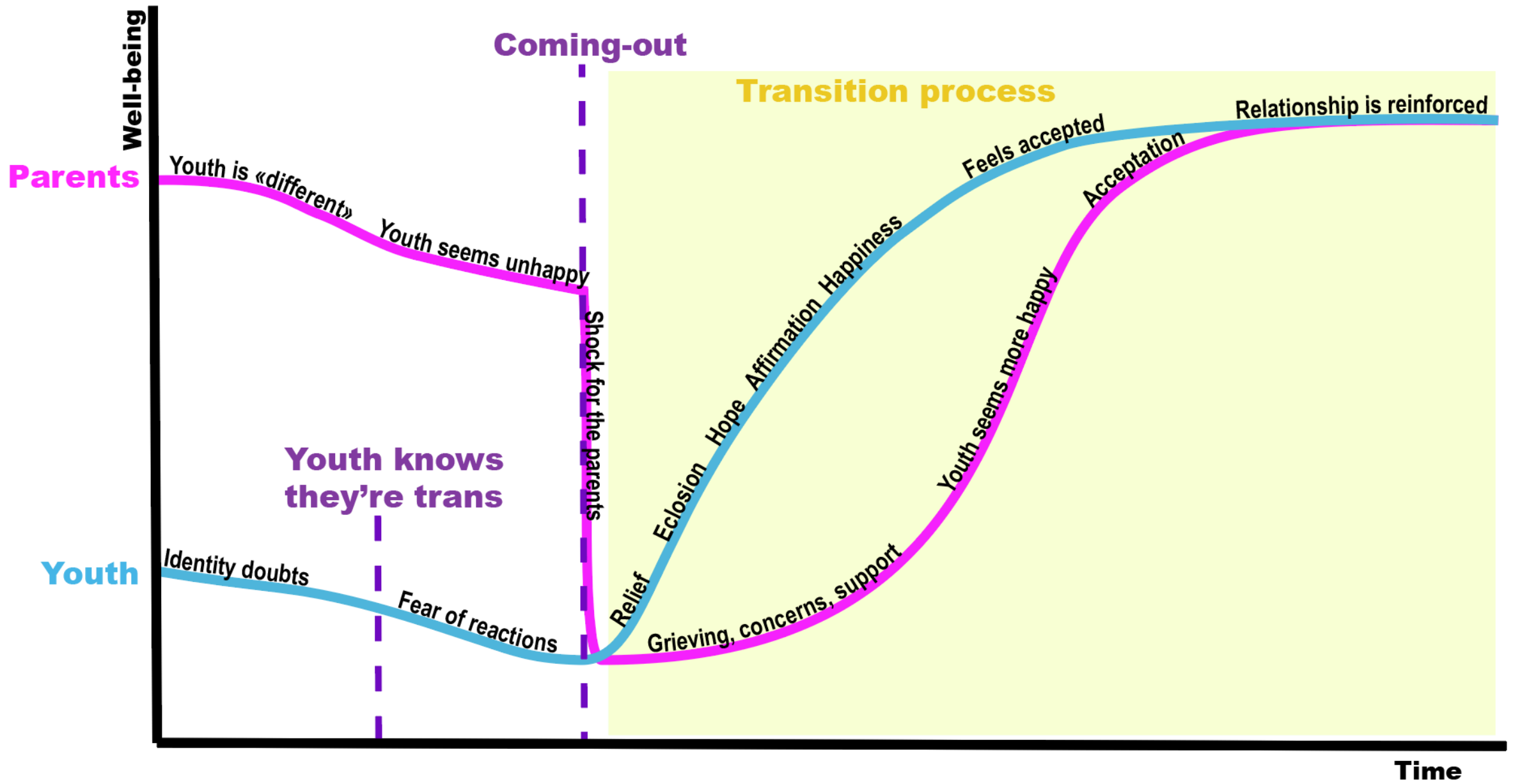
Kevin, 10yo, transmasculine

You know, looking back, he wasn't confused about his gender. He knew what his gender was. He was confused about how come it's not matching. That was the only confusion, like, "Why is everybody else saying I'm a girl? Why do I have these body parts when I'm a boy?" and now I look back, and that was the actual confusion. I don't think there was actual confusion about what his gender was. I think he knew all along.

Alma, Kevin's parent

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What's coming up for Trans Youth CAN!

- More infographics!
 - *"Who are trans and non-binary youth in clinical care?"* next
 - Plus more topics in the coming months - Watch social media and our website!
- Academic papers:
 - Youth characteristics
 - Sociodemographics, health, social context, first visit outcomes
 - Parent/caregiver experiences
 - Stressors on families from others, family functioning, parental conflict
 - Pathways to gender-affirming care
 - Timelines, wait times, providers seen
 - Gender distress and gender positivity measures
 - New measures to allow us to look at positivity as well as distress, and to separate feelings related to the body from feelings related to social gender

CONTACT US IF YOU HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS

www.transyouthcan.ca/contact/

Or email:

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**19 youth and 9 parents who
provided feedback on survey
items (English and French
groups)**

**6 youth and 7 parents in our
Community Consultation
Committees**

Our youth participants

**Our parent/caregiver
participants**

Our funder:



The *Stories of Gender-Affirming Care* Team

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